
**HISTORIC PRESERVATION REVIEW BOARD
STAFF REPORT AND RECOMMENDATION**

Property Address:	1425 Swann Street, NW	Agenda
Landmark/District:	Greater U Street Historic District	X Consent Calendar
		X Concept Review
Meeting Date:	April 26, 2012	Alteration
H.P.A. Number:	12-259	X New Construction
Staff Reviewer:	Jonathan Mellon	Demolition

Owner Brian Papke, representing Capital City Real Estate, seeks conceptual design review for construction of a two-story rowhouse on a vacant lot in the Greater U Street Historic District.

The Board reviewed a prior plan by architect Tim Bullock for construction of a two-story rowhouse on the site at the November 19, 2009 meeting. The Board adopted the staff report which called for the design of the new construction to closely mirror that of the nine adjacent Italianate rowhouses.

Property History and Description



Vacant Lot

1425 Swann Street

1425 Swann Street was once the site of one of ten Italianate frame rowhouses built in 1872 for speculative developer E. Meddler. Each house in the row was identical, with bracketed cornices, projecting bays, and stucco facades. This block of Swann Street is defined by a series of speculative rowhouse developments that over the years have

remained largely intact, and result in a streetscape this is one of the more distinctive to be found in the Greater U Street Historic District.

Proposal

The proposal calls for construction of a two-story with full basement rowhouse, designed to closely match the appearance of the adjacent Italianate rowhouses. The new rowhouse would have the same height and setback from the street, and architectural details such as the projecting bay, raised entrance stoop, and cornice, as well as materials – stucco façade and wood windows, found on its neighbors.

In addition, a roof deck and access stair/room are proposed, which would be setback from both the front and rear facades.

The existing concrete parking pad accessed via the alley, and rear yard fencing, would be retained.

Evaluation and Recommendation

As was stated in the staff report when the Board reviewed the prior (very similar) plan for new construction at the site, the proposal is consistent with the HPRB's *New Construction in Historic Districts* design guideline in terms of height, setback, massing, and rhythm. By showing deference to and taking design cues from the existing historic buildings, the proposal will restore continuity within the row without sticking out as being wholly dissimilar. Matching the height and setback of the historic properties will help the new construction blend in through respecting the established rhythmic nature and massing of the historic character of the row.

In order to ensure that the end result is new construction that is compatible with the character of the Greater U Street Historic District, careful attention will need to be paid to the execution, materials, and detailing of the project. In addition, the proposed roof deck and access stair/room will need to be reduced to the minimum height possible and set back sufficiently to ensure that they will not be visible from Swann Street, nor will impact the consistent two-story height of the row in the rear. The applicant should continue to coordinate closely with staff as the project continues through design development.

The HPO recommends that the HPRB determine the proposed conceptual design to be consistent with the purposes of the preservation act and delegate final approval to staff.